

REMARKS

Pending Claims 1, 2, 5-11, 21-26 stand rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over *Norman* (USPN 5,236,234) in view of *Mehta* (US Patent No. 5,319,522). In response, Applicant amends claims 5-10, and 21-26. Applicant also presents the following arguments.

Examiner argues that *Norman's* moulding 16 of Figs 1-2 is analogous to Applicants molded latch component that encapsulates an electric circuit. There is great phonetic similarity between *Norman's* "moulding" and Applicant's "molded" latch component. *Norman* introduces his moulding in col. 2, line 21. In col 5, lines 7-44 *Norman* teaches moulding a "unitary metal etching, stamping, or pressing 110" into the molding. The text and Fig. 8 to which it refers clearly indicates that the "unitary metal etching" is analogous to the wires of Applicants circuit board and that *Norman's* moulding with moulded in unitary metal etching is somewhat analogous to Applicant's circuit board. Furthermore, the tabs and other elements that Examiner references and that *Norman* teaches at 5, lines 7-44 are parts of the unitary metal etching. The tabs and similar connecting elements make the device easy to repair by replacing electrical components. Applicant's invention has plastic tabs and mounting elements to ease attachment and replacement of the entire molded latch component. The claims have been modified to clarify this point.

Norman's invention is a device to which electrical components can be attached to form an electrical circuit. In order to reach Applicants invention, *Norman's* device must be populated with all electrical components, then placed in a mold, and finally encapsulated in plastic. Examiner argues that *Mehta* teaches injection molding and that it would be thereby obvious for one practiced in the art of either door latches or

injection molding to encapsulate *Norman's* invention. Applicant finds this reasoning strained.

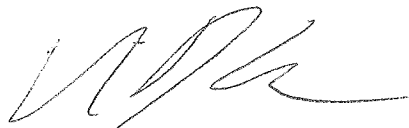
The reason for Applicant's perspective is that the cited prior art fails the teaching-suggestion-motivation test because the proper analogous are not present, there is no suggestion (other than Examiner's) to encapsulate *Norman's* device, and there is no motivation to encapsulate *Norman's* device because doing so renders it not fixable. Lacking an adequate TSM test, Examiner relies on an assertion of what someone skilled in the arts would have done, but not why they would have done it.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks, the Applicants submit that the claims are patentably distinct over the references and are in allowable form. Accordingly, the Applicants earnestly solicit the favorable consideration of their application, and respectfully request that it be passed to issue in its present condition.

Should the Examiner discern any remaining impediment to the prompt allowance of the aforementioned claims that might be resolved or overcome with the aid a telephone conference, he is cordially invited to call the undersigned at the telephone number set out below.

Respectfully submitted,



Richard H. Krukar

Attorney for the Applicants

Registration No. 53,162

Fax No.: (505) 314-1307

Telephone No.: (505) 314-1270